



Sponsor Outreach Responsibilities

To have a successful summer meals program, it is important to maximize participation at summer sites. As a sponsor, your most important outreach responsibility is to get children to participate. And the more people who know about your summer meals program, the more children will participate.

Keep Open Sites Open

Maximize participation by ensuring that open sites are truly open to all children in the community.

Publicize your summer meals program to ensure that children in the community are aware of and have access to open sites. Display banners, posters with directional arrows and other signs to help children easily find the meal service area.

If your program enrolls children for activities, ensure that your meal service is open and publicized in the community so that children can come only for the meals. If your program charges activity fees, ensure that children in the community have access to the free meal service.

Inform employees, volunteers and other adults who use your facility about your summer meal program so they can direct children to the meal service area.

Get the Word out to Children and Families

Work with local school food authorities serving the areas where your sites are located. School food authorities are required to cooperate with you, to the maximum extent practicable, to distribute materials informing families of the availability and location of free summer meals.

Publicize location and meal times through your local 2-1-1 hotline to help families find your summer meal sites. To find the 2-1-1 call centers in your State, go to <http://www.211.org>

Verify the accuracy of the site information listed in the WhyHunger hotline directory at 1-866-3-HUNGRY.

Use FNS resources, including fliers, door hangers and public service radio announcements to advertise your sites. They are available for you to download and customize at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/raise-awareness>.



Host kick-off events to introduce your program to families and showcase program activities to the children. Plan additional events during the summer to keep interest in the program high.

Ask local schools that have automated telephone calling systems to send messages informing parents about your summer meals program. Schedule these call-outs before school lets out and throughout the summer.

Announce the availability of summer meals to the media. In many States, the State agency may decide to fulfill this requirement on your behalf.

USDA Resources

Raise Awareness <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/raise-awareness>

Recruiting Children http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Recruiting_Children.pdf

Partner Resources

Food Research and Action Center – Summer Nutrition Toolkit <http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/summer-programs/simplified-summer-toolkit/>

Food Research and Action Center – Outreach to Increase Participation in the Summer Nutrition Programs http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/sfsp_outreach_tips.pdf

Review these ideas and adopt the strategies that seem reasonable to you and compatible with your program. Sponsors and the general public should contact the appropriate State Agency for additional guidance. State agencies should contact their FNS Regional Office for additional guidance.

List of FNS Regional Offices: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>

List of State Agencies: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>



Summer Meals Toolkit

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